

CLAIMS

1. A method for charging for services in a communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol, comprising defining at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship
5 information.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared charging information.
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared percentage
10 information.
4. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared amount information.
5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein there
15 is provided an attribute value pair defining a sponsor identity.
6. A method for charging for services in a communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol, comprising receiving a request to establish an IP session from a user of the
20 system; initiating an account with an account controller of the system; establishing the IP session; and initiating the monitoring of the account.
7. A method according to claim 6 wherein the step of initiating an account comprises transferring sponsorship information to
25 a charging system, the charging system being responsible for monitoring of the account.
8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the sponsorship information is transferred from an application server.

9. A method according to any one of claims 6 to 8 wherein the account is initiated responsive to an account request message.
10. A method according to any one of claims 6 to 9 wherein the
5 monitoring of the account is initiated responsive to an account request message.
11. A communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol and for charging for services, wherein the Diameter protocol is adapted to define at least one attribute value pair to
10 define sponsorship information.
12. A communication system according to claim 11 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared charging information.
13. A communication system according to claim 11 or claim 12 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared percentage
15 information.
14. A communication system according to any one of claims 11 to 13 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared amount information.
15. A communication system according to any one of claims 11
20 to 14 wherein the attribute value pair defines a sponsor identity.
16. A Diameter IP protocol adapted to define at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.
17. A Diameter IP protocol according to claim 16 wherein the
25 sponsorship information is provided to enable shared charging.
18. A communication system comprising: call control function means adapted to initiate a call session for a user of the system; an application server for providing an application
30 for a user of the system in a call session; and a charging

means for charging a call session for a user, wherein the call control function means, the application server and the charging means are adapted to communicate using a Diameter IP protocol.

- 5 19. A communication system according to claim 18 wherein the call control function means is a serving call state control function.
20. A communication system according to claim 18 or claim 19 wherein the charging means comprises an on-line charging
10 function and an off-line charging function.
21. A communication system according to any one of claims 18 to 20, wherein the charging is initiated on the basis of a Diameter IP communication between the call control function and the charging means.
- 15 22. A communication system according to any one of claims 18 to 21, wherein shared charging information is communicated to the charging means from the application function on the basis of a Diameter IP communication.
- 20 23. A communication system according to any one of claims 18 to 22, wherein the charging means monitors the call session charges responsive to a Diameter IP communication from the call control function.